



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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United States Department of Agriculture

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Maine Wild Blueberries January 2003

January 24, 2003

A special "THANK YOU" goes to Maine Wild Blueberry growers and processors who have helped us by completing wild blueberry surveys during 2002.

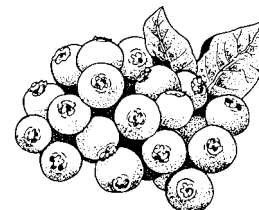
2002 WILD BLUEBERRY CROP HURT BY DROUGHT, OTHER FACTORS

MAINE WILD BLUEBERRY CROP: Maine's 2002 wild blueberry crop totaled 62.3 million pounds, a decrease of 17 percent from the 2001 output and 44 percent below the record production set in 2000.

Weather was cool and rainy during the spring of 2002, delaying bloom and providing poor pollinating conditions. Hot, dry conditions followed through mid-August, resulting in less than optimum conditions for berry development. Damage from the previous year's drought, insects, wildlife and disease also contributed to the below average production outcome in 2002.

The price for processing berries in 2002 is expected to average 25 cents, five cents per pound less than in 2001, resulting in a total processing value of \$15.5 million.

NORTH AMERICAN BLUEBERRY CROP: According to Dave Yarborough, Extension Blueberry Specialist, "In Canada, Quebec produced a large crop estimated at 45 million pounds, which follows a record crop in 2001 at more than 55 million pounds. This is slightly less than double their five-year average crop of 24 million pounds. Unlike Maine and the Maritime Provinces, Quebec received more than ample moisture in 2001 and 2002. Nova Scotia at 39.1 million pounds and New Brunswick at 15.35 million pounds were above their five-year averages. Prince Edward Island had poor pollination and a frost that reduced their crop by about 18% over last year to 4.4 million pounds. Newfoundland had a small crop in 2002 at 0.5 million pounds."



WILD BLUEBERRIES: Production and Value, 1992 - 2002

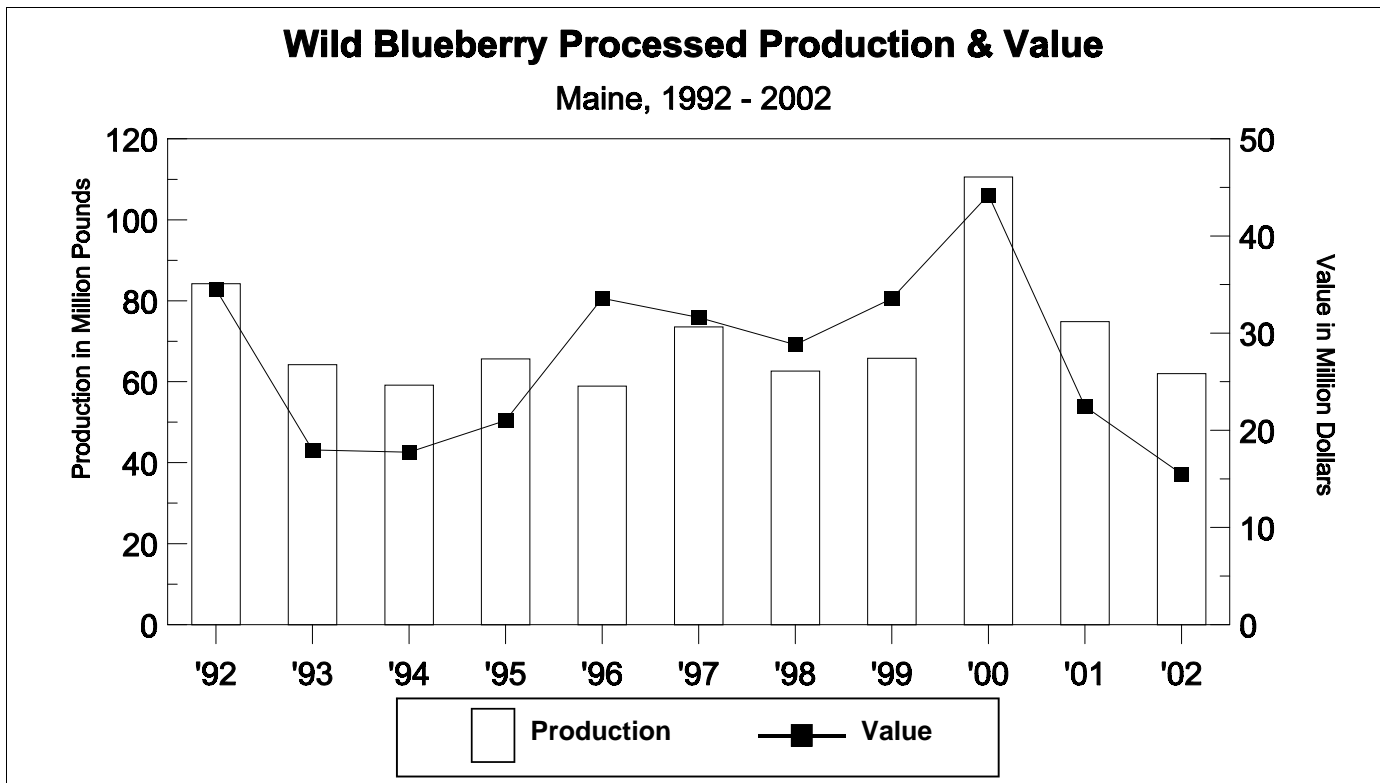
| STATE & YEAR | Total Production | All Price per Pound ^{1/} | Total Value of Production ^{1/} | Fresh Blueberries ^{2/} | | | Blueberries for Processing | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| | | | | Production | Price per Pound | Value of Production | Production | Price per Pound | Value of Production |
| | 1,000 Lbs | Cents | 1,000 Dollars | 1,000 Lbs | Dollars | 1,000 Dollars | 1,000 Lbs | Cents | 1,000 Dollars |
| Maine | | | | | | | | | |
| 1992 | 84,513 | 41 | 34,519 | 320 | -- | -- | 84,193 | 41 | 34,519 |
| 1993 | 64,562 | 28 | 17,979 | 350 | -- | -- | 64,212 | 28 | 17,979 |
| 1994 | 59,495 | 30 | 17,744 | 350 | -- | -- | 59,145 | 30 | 17,744 |
| 1995 | 65,944 | 32 | 21,004 | 305 | -- | -- | 65,639 | 32 | 21,004 |
| 1996 | 59,198 | 57 | 33,590 | 268 | -- | -- | 58,930 | 57 | 33,590 |
| 1997 | 73,816 | 43 | 31,622 | 276 | -- | -- | 73,540 | 43 | 31,622 |
| 1998 | 62,981 | 46 | 29,166 | 360 | 1.00 | 360 | 62,621 | 46 | 28,806 |
| 1999 | 66,102 | 51 | 33,889 | 300 | 1.10 | 330 | 65,802 | 51 | 33,559 |
| 2000 | 110,990 | 40 | 44,732 | 420 | 1.20 | 504 | 110,570 | 40 | 44,228 |
| 2001 | 75,200 | 31 | 22,945 | 350 | 1.40 | 490 | 74,850 | 30 | 22,455 |
| 2002 ^{3/} | 62,300 | 26 | 15,920 | 300 | 1.40 | 420 | 62,000 | 25 | 15,500 |

^{1/} All Price per Pound and Total Value of Production for 1992 - 1997 do not include fresh market blueberries.

^{2/} Fresh Blueberry Price per Pound and Value of Production are not available before 1998.

^{3/} Preliminary Price per Pound and Value of Production are based on expectations as of October 2002.

The wild blueberry estimating program is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Maine Department of Agriculture as a service to growers and others in the industry. The next Wild Blueberry report will be published and available on the Internet in mid-July. It will contain the final price statistics for the 2002 crop and the production forecast for the 2003 crop.



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